

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

name: Conjurer's Neck Archaeological District

other site number: 44CF20; 44CF646

2. Location

street & number 131 Waterfront Drive x not for publication

city or town Colonial Heights vicinity N/A
state Virginia code VA county (Independent City) code 570 Zip 23834

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined eligible for the

National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> buildings
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> objects
<u> 2 </u>	<u> 0 </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: a) Domestic: Prehistoric Village Sub: _____

b) Domestic: Single Dwelling _____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: a) Agriculture/Subsistence _____ Sub: _____

 Agricultural Field _____

b) Landscape: Unoccupied land _____
 Vacant: Not in Use _____

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7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

__ Sites: N/A
__ Contributing Structure: Colonial: Georgian

Materials (Enter categories from instructions) for contributing structure

foundation __ brick _____
roof __ metal _____
walls __ brick _____

other __ wood _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ___ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ___ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- X D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ___ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ___ B removed from its original location.
- ___ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ___ D a cemetery.
- ___ E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ___ F a commemorative property.
- ___ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Archaeology: Prehistoric; Historic-Non-Aboriginal

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Period of Significance _500 BC-AD 1600 and AD 1725-AD 1920____

Significant Dates _1879____

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

____N/A_____

Cultural Affiliation _Middle and Late Woodland and Colonial America

Architect/Builder _____N/A_____

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

x previously listed in the National Register

___ previously determined eligible by the National Register

___ designated a National Historic Landmark

___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

X State Historic Preservation Office

___ Other State agency

___ Federal agency

___ Local government

___ University

___ Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _8.3 acres____

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

1 18 290340 412880 2 _____

3 _____ 4 _____

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Christopher M. Stevenson, Regional Archaeologist, Petersburg, VA

Organization: Virginia Department of Historic Resources date: 20 Jan 2003

street & number: 19-B Bollingbrook St. telephone 804-862-6191

city or town Petersburg state VA zip code 23803

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Conjurer's Neck Homeowners Association, c/o Neil Knarr

street & number 131 Waterfront Drive telephone 804-526-9311

city or town Colonial Heights state VA zip code 23834

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7. Summary Description:

Description

The Conjurer's Neck Archaeological District contains a prehistoric village site (44CF20) already listed in the National Register of Historic Places, a Colonial-period plantation house (the Kennon House or Old Brick House), and associated archaeological deposits (44CF646). These resources are closely associated and are situated on the west bank of the Appomattox River within the city limits of Colonial Heights, Virginia (Figure 1). At 44CF20 prehistoric occupational debris is distributed over a 440' by 260' area on a low alluvial terrace that is currently covered by grass (Figure 2). Excavations conducted in 1966 and 1967 determined that the site had well preserved cultural features such as refuse-filled pits and human burials. Principal occupation at the prehistoric site dates to the Middle Woodland and Late Woodland Periods (500 BC-AD 1600). Site 44CF646 consists of a partially destroyed and rebuilt Colonial Period brick house located on a non-alluvial terrace 40 feet above the river (Figure 2). Archaeological remains from the Colonial Period consist of in-filled cellar-remains at each end of the standing house and the remains of associated outbuildings. These deposits date from the early to mid AD 1700s until the early AD1900s. A prehistoric component is also associated with the house and consists of an accumulation of Middle and Late Woodland lithics and ceramics that are likely related to the occupation at prehistoric site of 44CF20.

Background

Prehistoric Site 44CF20

Located at the base of a 30' high bluff on a low terrace 5' to 10' above an adjacent marsh to the east, the prehistoric archaeological site (44CF20) sits on the eastern end of a peninsula formed by the Appomattox River and Swift Creek (Figure 1, Photo 1). This area has traditionally been known as Conjurer's Field since the 17th century. The confluence of the Appomattox River and the James River is 5.5 miles to the east, and the fall line, dividing the Piedmont and Coastal Plain physiographic provinces, is 2.5 miles to the west.

Representing a prehistoric village, occupational debris at 44CF20 is concentrated on a low

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terrace over a rectangular area with dimensions of 440' by 260'. The site contains cultural material dating primarily to the Middle Woodland and Late Woodland Periods (500 BC-AD1600), although Late Archaic period projectile points (3000 BC-1000 BC) have been found at the site.

In 1966 and 1967, Leverette B. Gregory conducted archaeological research at 44CF20. He excavated 29, 5' squares (Figure 3). Upon removal of the plowzone, a shallow (0.2' thick) but relatively undisturbed midden was observed. It was excavated in seven squares. The midden and cultural earthen features contained within it documented the excellent preservation at the site. Excavated features included 20 refuse-filled earthen pits, three human burials, and a dog burial (Figure 2). The refuse-filled pits were unusually large and ranged between 4' to 7' in diameter. However, they tended to be shallow for their size and were less than 1' deep.

Ray R. Sasser, Jr. analyzed the ceramic collection in 1971-72. He described a wide variety of ceramic wares that suggested elaborate cultural interaction throughout the Middle and Late Woodland periods. Other artifacts excavated at 44CF20 included an extensive collection of projectile points, preforms, modified flakes, debitage, celts, chisels, hammerstones and fire-cracked rock. A wide variety of exceedingly well preserved bone and shell artifacts also were recovered. This included mammal and fish remains, fish hook fragments, turtle shell cups, antler punches, and fresh water clamshells. The entire collection of artifacts from the 1966-67 excavations is curated by the Department of Anthropology at the College of William and Mary. A recent analysis of the faunal collection by William and Mary archaeologists identified a total of 32 taxa within the 1,442 bone fragments and demonstrated a wide species diversity exploited by native peoples of these time periods.

Staff archaeologists at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources examined the prehistoric archaeological site in 1984 and 1988, and found it to be in a good state of preservation. These inspections indicated that the site surface had not been modified since the 1966-67 excavations. Through a combination of surface examinations and subsurface tests, site boundaries were shown to conform to the limits pictured in Figure 2.

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This historic site is known as the Kennon or Old Brick House and it sits on property originally patented to Richard Kennon in the 17th century. Although widely reported to have been constructed in 1685, an evaluation by Mark J. Wenger of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation states that the house was built between 1725 and 1750. The house burned in 1879 and was rebuilt in a modified form (Photo 2,3, 4) shortly thereafter. The unaltered portions of the house show that English bond brickwork was used in the basement but that the exterior of the building was entirely in Flemish bond. The original walls have a fine belt course and arches. The use of darker headers (some glazed) was a decorative feature more frequently used in the first half of the 18th century. The use of Dutch tiles in the basement floor is also indicative of an 18th century date.

The original form of the house is proposed to have been a five-bay, two-story, one -room deep 18th-century brick house similar in form to the Ludwell House in Williamsburg. After the house burned it was rebuilt as a three-bay structure with a two story wooden wing on the north end (since demolished) (Photo 5). The interior woodwork dates to the 19th century. There is evidence of the remains of a riverside garden in front of the house and reference to a kitchen and well at the rear of the residence. When the house was shortened from its original length the basement was filled in with soil. There are currently surface indications of outbuildings in the immediate vicinity of the house that are represented by depressions in the surrounding lawn.

Archaeological test investigations were conducted in 2002 to assess the integrity and information content of the historic period resources associated with the Kennon House. Five test trenches (Trenches A-E) were placed to the north and south of the original structure (Figure 4) and revealed five historic/prehistoric features with excellent integrity. A prehistoric feature was located in Trench B below the region of surface disturbance. It consisted of a large gray stain with lithic and ceramic material on the surface. In Trench C, no features were found but over 200 lithic and ceramic artifacts dating to the Middle and Late Woodland Periods were recovered in an expediently acquired sample from the trench spoil pile and attest to the extremely high artifact densities in this area of the property.

Trench A was positioned immediately to the north of the extant house within the estimated limits of the original house foundation and underneath the later frame addition. Excavations beneath the surface revealed two rectangular posts and a brick floor. It appears likely that the brick surface

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represents the basement floor of the post-1879 frame addition, and that the posts represent structural components of this later construction. Processing of the soil from above and below this floor

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recovered a wide variety of cultural items in large numbers. Over 400 artifacts consisting of ceramic fragments, butchered bone, oyster shell, buttons, glass, kaolin pipe stems and a coin were recovered. Chronologically, these items range between 1738 and 1900. However, a mean date for the 73 ceramic items (excluding white ware) placed the principal occupation of this portion of the site in the latter quarter of the 18th century. This was reinforced by the discovery of a Spanish cross pistareen coin with the numbers "179_" (last digit is missing).

One additional historic feature with stratigraphic integrity was found in Trench D located to the south of the house (Figure 4). Backhoe trenching across a large surface depression exposed a three-meter section of a much larger historic refuse pit that contained thousands of brick and brick fragments as well as domestic debris. The brick likely represents the unused, and non-recycled, material from the rebuilding of the house after the 1879 fire. The pit in which the brick was disposed of, may represent the cellar of an earlier structure or a hole explicitly excavated for that purpose. However, the brick layer and surface soil deposits cover a soil horizon at the margin of the feature that pre-dates the 1879 burning event, thereby forming discreet cultural soil horizons.

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8. Statement of Significance

The Conjurer's Field Archaeological District, in the City of Colonial Heights, Virginia, contains two important archaeological sites. Prehistoric site 44CF20 contains an undisturbed midden stratum, intact earthen features and well-preserved faunal remains. Further study of these remains could contribute significant new information on regional Middle Woodland and Late Woodland period subsistence practices, settlement patterns and environmental adaptations. The presence of well-preserved burials dated to the same time periods should also prove to be important in the study of population demography and mortuary practices. Further indicative of the site's archaeological research significance is the diverse mixture of Middle and Late Woodland period ceramic wares which could be instrumental in tracking past cultural interactions through comparative study with other sites in the region, especially the contact between people in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain physiographic provinces, and along the fall line separating these two zones.

Historic site 44CF646 is a Colonial Period plantation house constructed between 1725 and 1750 that is associated with a Middle and Late Woodland component likely related to site 44CF20. Intact features and high densities of cultural items would complement the research potential of 44CF20. Site 44CF646 also possesses undisturbed and stratified cultural features dating to the late 1700s and afterward. The presence of both high densities and wide variety of food remains as well as personal items would facilitate the study of late 18th-century consumption and disposal patterns for a later Virginia plantation and post-Colonial farmstead.

Background

Prehistoric Site 44CF20

Site 44CF20 is one of the very last of the larger Middle and Late Woodland period villages located along the Appomattox River in the Hopewell-Petersburg region to have escaped destruction from recent industrial and housing development. As such, the site has high archaeological research potential for studies on the Appomattox Indians and their predecessors who occupied this area in the fall line zone separating the Piedmont and Coastal Plain physiographic provinces. Further enhancing the site significance is the presence of an undisturbed prehistoric midden, intact earthen features, and

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well preserved faunal remains from animals and humans. All of these features are associated with a wide variety of artifacts.

Given this excellent state of preservation, 44CF20 is likely to contain information important to regional studies in Middle and Late Woodland Period subsistence practices, settlement patterns, and environmental adaptations. Situated in the fall line zone, site inhabitants were afforded the unusual opportunity to exploit riverine and terrestrial resources in two adjacent provinces, the Piedmont and Coastal Plain. Adaptive strategies for utilization of this area separating the Coastal Plain Algonkian societies and the Piedmont Siouan societies is a major research concern in the region, for which applicable data are dependent upon excavations at sites such as 44CF20.

Due to the presence of well preserved burials at 44CF20, the site is also likely to be significant for local studies of Middle and Late Woodland period population demography and mortuary practices. Given major changes in diet with an increased reliance on cultigens accompanied by increased sedentism, the human skeletal remains should provide significant data on possible dietary stresses and diseases that local populations were facing during these two time periods. Related to this is the major change in social complexity where populations were changing from egalitarian tribal societies into hierarchically ranked societies known as chiefdoms. This process of centralization of political and religious authority is most easily studied through variation in mortuary practices at sites that have well preserved burial remains. Such is the case for site 44CF20.

The various ceramic wares recovered from the site and datable to principally the Middle and Late Woodland periods should also provide significant information on cultural interactions existing between the Piedmont and Coastal Plain physiographic provinces. Indian trails emanating from the vicinity of Petersburg and Hopewell and proceeding to the south and west into North Carolina and western Virginia have been documented for the historic period. These same trails were likely used in the prehistoric era. As one of the last remaining villages still existing on the Appomattox River in this area, further excavations should aid in better definition of inter-regional iterations.

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Historic Site 44CF646

In 1639, Richard Kennon, an English importer from a London firm, patented property at the confluence of the Appomattox River and Swift Creek. However, it was not until around 1670 that he came to America where he became a merchant associated with the Bermuda Hundred Plantation. During his tenure in Virginia Richard Kennon I served in the House of Burgesses as a representative of Henrico County. Prior to his death in 1690 he had changed his occupation from an importer to a planter. In addition, he and his wife, Elizabeth Worsham Kennon, had several children. The eldest son, Richard Kennon, Jr., died at an age of 4 years, and was buried adjacent to the site of the brick house in 1688. His second son, Richard Kennon II (died 1736), married Agnes Bolling and his third son, William Kennon (died 1761) married Ann Epps. William and Ann had two children. Richard was born in 1712 and his brother William was born in 1713. Richard inherited the Conjurer's Neck property and it passed from his hands upon his death in 1761 to his son John who died in 1780. The disposition of the property cannot be followed from this point. The Chesterfield county records only show a Richard Kennon, grandson of Richard Kennon II, as in possession of 16 acres. By 1813, this parcel no longer appears in the tax books.

The larger Conjurer's Neck property was subdivided into 8 farms sometime during the 19th century. The parcel with the house was owned by Robert Henry Batte of Petersburg. During his ownership the house burned in 1879 and the interior was destroyed. In the reconstruction that occurred soon after the fire, the length of the house was reduced in size and the end walls rebuilt to form a three-bay structure. Mr. Batte sold the house shortly thereafter and it went through a series of owners until it was purchased by Willis Comstock in 1909 from Theodore Lower. Various members of the Comstock family lived in the house until 1952. From then on it became a rental property until it was deeded to the Conjurer's Neck Homeowners Association in 1990.

The devastating events associated with the burning of the Kennon House in 1879 provide a unique structure for the study of Colonial and post-Colonial history in Virginia. The rich pre-1879 deposits date principally to the late 1700's and show this to have been the most intensive use of the house that was associated with the lives of Richard and John Kennon. As such, the variety of archaeological remains from this period reflects the status and lifestyle of a plantation economy from the later Colonial period. In the early 1800s, there appears to have been a period of inactivity where

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the plantation property was sold off to the point where no taxes were collected on the goods produced. After this, the occupation of the house reflects that of a smaller farm operation directed by Robert Henry Batte. Mr. Batte lacked the resources of the earlier Kennons as reflected in the rebuilding of the house. The structure was not rebuilt to its original dimensions and a later, less expensive, frame addition was subsequently added. This suggests that Mr. Batte was of more modest means. Consequently, the archaeological deposits from this period provide a contrast to those earlier occupants and permit a comparative study of status and consumption patterns in a post-Colonial farm economy with that of a previous era.

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Bibliography

Sasser, Ray R.

- 1972 A Ceramic Analysis of the Comstock Site, Chesterfield County, Virginia. Report on file at the Department of Anthropology, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia.

Deitrick, V., C.C. Long, G. Duncan, T. Holliday and L. Fischer

- 1997 Analysis of Archaeological Materials from the Comstock Site (44Cf20). William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia

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Verbal Boundary Description

The prehistoric archaeological site (44CF20) covers an oval area measuring 440 feet by 260 feet. The historic Kennon House site (44CF646) covers an oval area measuring 420 feet by 220 feet. The district boundary encompasses these two sites and the sloping terrain between them. The area of the district is sub-rectangular and is 500 feet by 450 feet and conforms to the property boundary of the current owners, which is identified as parcel 6608000000A on the tax parcel maps for the City of Colonial Heights, Virginia. The district is located about 5,000 feet SSE of the confluence of the Appomattox River and Swift Creek.

Boundary Justification.

The boundaries of the prehistoric site have been defined on the basis of continuous archaeological deposits identified through surface collection and subsurface testing. The limits of the historic house site are defined as the immediate house area and the areas where gardens and outbuildings (e.g. kitchen, well, barn) have the greatest chance of being located.

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List of Figures

- Figure 1: USGS 7.5' Hopewell Quadrangle 1969 (Photo revised 1987)
Figure 2: Property subdivision showing the locations of 44CF20 and 44CF646
Figure 3: Test unit and feature locations at 44CF20
Figure 4: Test unit locations at the Kennon House (44CF646)

List of Photographs

The following information is the same for photographs 1 through 4:

Property: Conjurer's Neck Archaeological District

Date of Photographs: February 2003

Photographer: Christopher Stevenson

Negative number: 20360

Negatives filed: Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

Photo 1 of 5: View: 44CF20 overview (facing east)

Photo 2 of 5: View: Kennon House, front view (facing south)

Photo 3 of 5: View: Kennon House, rear view (facing east)

Photo 4 of 5: View: Kennon House, end view (facing north)

Photo 5 of 5: View: Kennon House, north end with frame addition

Photographer: Unknown

Date of Photo: Unknown

Negative Number: None (no negative exists)